

## **A TRIBUTE TO THE LATE WELLY K. HOPKINS (House of Representatives - March 01, 1994)**

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(Mr. PICKLE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute, and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PICKLE. Mr. Speaker, 2 days ago Welly K. Hopkins gently passed away at 95 years of age. Welly K. was a native of Gonzales, TX where he was born on September 3, 1898. He attended the University of Texas Law School and became an attorney in 1923, returning to Gonzales to practice law.

In 1930, while campaigning for the Texas State Senate, Welly recruited an enterprising young man, Lyndon Baines Johnson, to serve as his campaign manager. Welly's campaign was successful and they became inseparable friends. As a member of the Texas Senate, Welly was distinguished as being a strong and combatant friend of labor and people who work for a living.

In 1935, at the insistence of Vice-President John Nance Garner, he was commissioned as a special assistant to the Attorney General of the United States in charge of the trial section of the criminal division. During his tenure he prosecuted cases all across the country involving the right of coal miners to engage in collective bargaining. His vigorous advocacy of the rights of the working man brought him to the attention of John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers of America, for whom he went to work in 1940.

He served Mr. Lewis and the United Mine Workers for 29 years. During these years Welly fought for collective bargaining agreements to improve the working conditions of miners, to provide health benefits for them and their families, and to establish pension plans for them in retirement. His advocacy on behalf of the coal miners of America took him from the mines to union halls, and from congressional hearing rooms to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Throughout his long life Welly K. Hopkins was privileged to know and serve some of the great leaders of our times. He particularly treasured his lifelong friendship with Congressman, Senator, and President Lyndon Johnson. He honored their work and cherished their confidence and friendship. During the 1930's, 1940's, and 1950's his was one of the strongest voices in Congress and the city of Washington that shaped the destinies of workers in this country. He was a great individual, and we mourn his passing.